

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 2292

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, CG, US, PINR

SUBJECT: ZAIRE TRIAL; ALLEGED INVOLVEMENT OF AMERICANS

REF: A) KINSHASA 2255; B) STATE 60039

1. SUMMARY: DURING OPENING SESSION OF PLOT TRIAL, MAJOR KALUME GAVE SOME DETAILS OF ALLEGED INVOLVEMENT OF AMERICAN DIPLOMAT. ANOTHER ACCUSED GAVE TESTIMONY WHICH REFERRED TO AN AMERICAN OFFICIAL WHO ALLEGEDLY WAS IN ZAIRE IN 1972. IN DEPOSITIONS, IN QUESTIONING BY MEMBERS OF TRIBUNAL, AND IN LOCAL MEDIA, ALLEGATIONS OF AMERICAN INVOLVEMENT HAVE BEEN GIVEN LOW KEY TREATMENT. ALLEGED LOCAL INVOLVEMENT OF LIBYAN AMBASSADOR AND BELGIAN DIPLOMAT HAVE RECEIVED MORE ELABORATE ATTENTION. EMBASSY BELIEVES DEPT'S GUIDANCE CONTAINED REF B REMAINS VALID. END SUMMARY

2. AS REPORTED REF A, DURING OPENING SESSION OF PLOT TRIAL, TESTIMONY OF ONE OF THE MAIN DEFENDANTS, MAJOR KALUME HAMBALU, INCLUDED REFERENCES TO AN AMERICAN DIPLOMAT. FOLLOWING ARE FURTHER DETAILS OF TESTIMONY WHICH HAVE BEEN PROVIDED BY EMBASSY WHO ATTENDED TRIAL AND BY LOCAL MEDIA REPORTING:

3. MAJOR KALUME, IN A DEPOSITION AND IN ANSWER TO QUESTIONS, CONFIDENTIAL

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SAID THAT DURING A 1977 VISIT TO BELGIUM HE MET WITH KANYONGA, SECRETARY GENERAL OF MARC. AFTER 2300 HOURS ON A DATE NOT CITED, KALUME SAID HE ACCOMPANIED KANYONGA BY AUTOMOBILE FROM BRUSSELS TO LIEGE WHERE THEY MET AT 0130 WITH MONGUYA (FORMER GOVERNOR OF SHABA) AND AN AMERICAN DIPLOMAT IN THE APARTMENT OF AN ELDERLY BELGIAN COUPLE BESIDE THE MEUSE RIVER. IN THAT MEETING KALUME SAID HE WAS SHOWN A SUITCASE IN WHICH THERE WERE

TWO SILENCER-EQUIPPED FIRE ARMS. MONGUYA TOLD KALUME THAT HE COULD PROVIDE WEAPONS OF THIS KIND IN ZAIRE, THAT HE DIRECTED A MOVEMENT OF THE RESURRECTION OF THE CONGO (MARC), THAT HE WAS SUPPORTED IN DIPLOMATIC CIRCLES, AND THAT HE RECEIVED POLITICAL, MATERIAL, AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT IN THESE CIRCLES. KALUME SAID HE WAS TOLD THAT THE BELGIAN COUPLE HAD ALREADY SPENT 3 MILLION BELGIAN FRANCS FOR PRINTING MISO GAA (A MARC PAMPHLET PUBLISHED IN BRUSSELS). KALUME TESTIFIED THAT MONGUYA SAID HE COULD PROVIDE THE NECESSARY MEANS AND CITED FUNDS TO WHICH HE HAD ACCESS IN VARIOUS CIRCLES. MONGUYA REPORTEDLY SPELLED OUT HIS POLITICS TO THE MAJOR AND TOLD HIM WHAT WAS EXPECTED OF HIM. IN EFFECT, KALUME WAS TO PROVOKE DISORDER AND PANIC, ORCHESTRATE SABOTAGE AND SELECTED TERRORISM, ALL OF THIS ARRANGED IN SUCH A WAY AS TO ENGENDER " THE MOST COMPLETE INSECURITY" IN KINSHASA.

4. FROM LIEGE, MAJOR KALUME SAID HE RETURNED TO BRUSSELS WITH SUITCASE CONTAINING THE TWO SILENCER-EQUIPPED FIRE ARMS. AT THE FRENCH FRONTIER, HE SAID, THE ARMS WERE SEIZED BY CUSTOMS OFFICIALS. KALUME ALSO TESTIFIED THAT DURING THE ABOVE-MENTIONED MEETING AT LIEGE EITHER MONGUYA OR KANYONGA SAID, IN REFERENCE TO AN AMERICAN DIPLOMAT PRESENT, "I HAVE HIS SUPPORT. IF THIS WERE NOT SO, HE WOULD NOT BE HERE."

5. DURING TRIAL PROCEEDINGS, NO NAME WAS CITED FOR AMERICAN ALLEGEDLY ATTENDING THE LIEGE MEETING. NEITHER LAWYERS NOR MEMBERS OF TRIBUNAL ASKED KALUME FOR NAME OF AMERICAN OR FOR OTHER CONFIDENTIAL

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DETAILS SUCH AS NAMES OF BELGIAN COUPLE DESCRIBED. NOTHING WAS SAID DURING THE TESTIMONY TO INDICATE THAT THE ALLEGED AMERICAN DELOMAT SAID ANYTHING AT ALL DURING THE COURSE OF THE EVENING. (COMMENT: IN FACT, EMBOFF ATTENDING TRIAL FELT THAT KALUME AND THE TRIBUNAL MEMBERS INTENTIONALLY AVOIDED FURTHER DISCUSSION OF ALLEGED INVOLVEMENT OF AN AMERICAN DIPLOMAT.)

6. ONLY OTHER REFERENCE SO FAR TO ANY AMERICAN INVOLVEMENT OCCURRED DURING TESTIMONY OF MAJOR PANUBULE KAKENGELE, WHO REFERRED IN PASSING TO A "MR. GEORGE" WHO ALLEGEDLY HAD COME TO ZAIRE FROM THE U.S. IN 1972 TO GIVE TRAINING TO PRESIDENT'S SECURITY GUARDS. THIS WAS MENTIONED IN CONNECTION WITH A COUP D'ETAT ACTION PLAN THAT MAJOR PANUBULE SAID HE HAD PREPARED AS AN EXERCISE FOR THE PRESIDENTIAL GUARD DURING "MR. GEORGE'S" TRAINING PROGRAM. (WE ASSUME THIS IS REFERENCE TO GEORGE KEITHAN WHOSE NAME WAS RAISED DURING EVENTS SURROUNDING 1975 COUP MANQUE.)

7. COMMENT: EMBASSY IS STRUCK BY RELATIVELY LOW KEY IN WHICH ALLEGATIONS ABOUT INVOLVEMENT OF AMERICANS HAVE BEEN MADE. ALTHOUGH SALONGO GOES INTO ESSENTIALLY ALL DETAILS ABOUT AMERICAN DIPLOMAT CITED ABOVE, AZAP CONTAINS ONLY TWO LINES ON THAT SUBJECT, AND ELIMA (WHILE OTHERWISE GIVING TRIAL ELABORATE COVERAGE)

OMITS ANY REFERENCE WHATSOEVER TO AMERICAN DIPLOMAT. NONE OF
MEDIA MENTIONED "MISTER GEORGE" WHOSE NAME CAME UP DURING
TESTIMONY. BY COMPARISON, TRIAL ITSELF AND LOCAL MEDIA HAVE
GIVEN SOMEWHAT MORE ELABORATE ATTENTION TO ALLEGED INVOLVEMENT OF
BELGIAN DIPLOMAT RENIER NIJSKENS. MEDIA ALSO HAVE REPORTED AT
SOME LENGTH TESTIMONY THAT LOCAL PLOTTERS HAD SIGNIFICANT CONTACTS
WITH LIBYAN AMBASSADOR TO ZAIRE.
FROM RESULTS OF FIRST DAY OF TRIALS, EMBASSY BELIEVES GOZ WISHES
TO PLAY DOWN ALLEGATIONS OF INVOLVEMENT OF ANY AMERICAN OFFICIALS.
THERE HAVE BEEN NO EVIDENT ATTEMPTS TO IMPLICATE AMERICAN GOVERN-
MENT IN ANY WAY. THUS THERE ARE NO NEW DEVELOPMENTS WHICH WE
BELIEVE SHOULD CHANGE U.S. POSTURE. WE CONSIDER RECOMMENDATIONS
CONTAINED REF A STILL VALID AND BELIEVE DEPTS GUIDANCE CONTAINED
IN REF B STILL APPROPRIATE COURSE OF ACTION. SEPTTEL REPORTS
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OTHER ASPECTS OF TRIAL PROCEEDINGS.
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